

## THE ROLE OF INTRAPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOR AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS ON THE INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE OF MIDDLE MANAGERS IN NIGERIAN MEDIUM ENTERPRISES: A PILOT STUDY

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### Abstract

The aim of this research is to quantitatively explore the role of intrapreneurial behavior and psychological factors on the individual performance of middle managers in Nigerian medium enterprises (MEs). The issue of intrapreneurial behavior and individual performance is barely studied, specifically as regards to medium enterprise middle managers. The deplorable performance of individual managers and employees has remained a fundamental concern for MEs not only Nigeria. Survey method was adopted for the study in which 41 usable questionnaires were collected from MEs in Kano state of Nigeria which is one of the study strata using the stratified random method of sampling. The model produces seven factors to be used as determinants of individual performance of middle managers in Nigerian MEs. The instruments reliability and validity were therefore, scrutinized through expert panel and the data sample was analyzed using SPSS v24. Finally, the result proves the instruments reliability and validity for the adapted constructs in the pilot study. Hence, future studies can extend this finding by establishing relationship between the study variables.

**Keywords:** Intrapreneurial behavior, psychological factors, individual performance, Nigeria.

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In all aspects of management, the term performance has been an accustomed term at both organizational and individual levels of analysis. For instance, performance evaluation, performance assessment, performance measurement, or performance management are utilized in various management fields (Aminu & Shariff, 2015). However, the concept of performance is still relative, depending on the individual and the area defines it (Aminu & Shariff, 2015).

Despite the copious attention given to individual performance, studies on the individual performance of middle managers/supervisors in Medium enterprises are still rare. Poor productivity has been witnessed among the staff of Medium and small enterprises compared to larger firms in developing countries (Kelana, Mansor, & Sanny, 2016). Notwithstanding, the performance and productivity of managers and employees has been a challenge to Medium enterprises (Thompson, 2017). Similarly, more than 50% of the global workforce sample indicated concerns on the performance of their managers (Watson, 2012). A shockingly large number of firms appear not to be keeping pace on how they are supporting and managing the people they assigned to perform the work on ground (Watson, 2012).

Entrepreneurship epitomizes the opportunity to breed wealth, earnings and employment (Mahmoud & Muharam, 2014), nonetheless most of the Nigerian medium enterprises (MEs) are performing poorer than their average capacity (SMEDAN, 2013), with a fronting rock-hard competition and dreadful managerial capacities (Agwu, 2014; Onugu, 2005). Likewise, less than 40% of the full-time global workforce are engaged greatly with high performance, and this has an adverse consequence on

the organizational performance of both medium and large firms (Watson, 2012). Similarly, the performance of Nigerian workers has been poor (Akinyele, 2007; Taiwo, 2010) which can affect the competitiveness and performance of their organizations.

Thus, employees and managers that greatly perform their jobs are essential in fronting this challenges (Jyoti & Dev, 2017). Many studies have been conducted on factors that improve the performance of managers and employees with the aim of enhancing the general competitiveness and performance of their organizations. Among these factors are personality (Barrick, Parks, & Mount, 2005; Fang et al., 2015; Ghani, Yunus, & Bahry, 2016; Hogan & Holland, 2003; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Judge, Rodell, Klinger, Simon, & Crawford, 2013; Judge & Zapata, 2015; Lee & Olshfski, 2002; Raza & Ahmed, 2014; Sackett & Walmsley, 2014; Jesus F Salgado, 1997), psychological safety (Lance Frazier, Fainshmidt, Klinger, Pezeshkan, & Vracheva, 2016; Singh et al., 2013) and psychological empowerment (Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007; Chiang & Hsieh, 2012; Hall, 2008; Hechanova, Alampay, & Franco, 2006; Li, Wei, Ren, & Di, 2015; Liden, Wayne, & Sparrowe, 2000; Ölçer & Florescu, 2015; Sun, 2016) etc. Providentially, recent studies proved that intrapreneurial behavior (IB) is adept to improving the individual performance of managers and employees (Ahmad, Nasurdin, & Zainal, 2012; Bakar & Mahmood, 2014; Bakar, Mahmood, Ramli, & Saad, 2016). However, studies that put these factors in to a unified framework have not been witnessed.

Therefore, it is important to investigate the validity and reliability of these constructs as unified framework in different context, economies and environments prior to conducting the actual study, to guarantee the internal consistency and content validity of the measures. This pilot test was conducted for two primary reasons; the first is to test the reliability and validity of the study instruments, and the second is to have a preview of the real conditions before engaging in to the full scale survey, which permits the researcher to forestall potential problems and make adjustments. Thus, this paper presents the pilot test results of the determinants of middle manager performance in Nigerian MEs.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Medium Enterprises in Nigeria**

Medium Enterprises (MEs) vastly contribute to social and economic progression, and hence, they are fundamental to the economic advancement of every country (Aminu & Shariff, 2015). Small and Medium Enterprises contribute to employment creation (Mahmoud, 2015; Mahmoud & Muharam, 2014; Mahmoud, Muharam, & Mas'ud, 2015), which consequently lowers regional inequalities between rural and urban areas (World Bank 2013). However, it is the MEs that advanced to become big corporations (Aminu & Shariff, 2015).

A general definition is lacking for Medium and Small enterprises. Nonetheless, three definite parameters are commonly applied by many countries i.e. capital investment, number of employees, and business turnover or production volume (Aremu & Adeyemi, 2011). In Nigeria, Medium and Small enterprises are demarcated based on assets (land and buildings excluding) and number of employees. Medium firms are enterprises that possess a least possible asset of 50 million Naira and less than 500 million Naira maximum of assets not including land and buildings, they are also classified as firms that has the aggregate workforce of 50-199 employees. On the other hand, small firms are those that hold minimum of 10 and a maximum of 49 employees with 5 million Naira minimum asset and less than 50 million Naira maximum assets not including land and buildings (Aminu & Shariff, 2015; SMEDAN, 2013). The number of employees is universally the leading factor for the classification of Medium and Small Enterprises, accordingly, the employment-based classification precedes when there is conflict between employment-based and the asset-based delineation (SMEDAN, 2013).

Presently, the Nigerian SMEs performance is lower than their potentials. It is however claimed that the SMEs contribution to Nigeria's national GDP is inadequate for copious reasons. These consists the limited practice of innovation to tasks/operations and disparaging competition from imported products

(Bangudu, 2013). Since these firms are piloted by their employees especially the managers, and noting the important role of middle managers, enhancing the individual performance of their operations/production middle managers is crucial to achieve and sustain the performance and competitive advantage of the firms.

## **2.2 Individual performance**

Individual performance (IP) is indissolubly concomitant with organizational performance (Linda Koopmans et al., 2011) and competitive advantage (Sonnentag & Frese, 2002). Many scholars settled that, the individual performance of managers and employees have a significant influence on the general success of organizations (Gberevbie, 2010a, 2010b; Khan & Jabbar, 2013; Rafiei, Amini, & Foroozandeh, 2014; Sonnentag & Frese, 2002; Susanty & Miradipta, 2013).

Employee selection and appointment are mostly built on selecting applicants that are more likely to perform better (Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). IP is an important measure of outcome for studies in the job-related setting, it is obvious that IP indicators varies for different jobs (Koopmans et al., 2011). Several studies used various explanations to measure the performance of specific kind of employees, but a recently general measurement for all kinds of employees (white collar, blue collar and pink collar employees) of different sectors have been developed and validated (Koopmans et al., 2014).

Individual performance is defined as the accrued value to the organization of the distinct behavioral manifestations that is accomplished by an employee over a standard interval of time (Motowildo, Borman, & Schmit, 1997). According to Campbell, (1983) the traditional description of individual performance basically denotes to the magnitude by which an individual assists an organization to realize its goals (Motowildo et al., 1997). IP is the amount of success by individual employee in undertaking his duties and work (Daniel, & Purwanti, 2015). IP is the estimated value of individual actions in organizations which are apposite to increasing the effectiveness of organizations (Tabiu, Pangil, & Othman, 2016).

## **2.3 Intrapreneurial Behavior**

Intrapreneurial Behavior (IB) is concept that was derived from Entrepreneurial Orientation (EO), which is described as employee behavior that is represented by being innovative, taking risk, and being proactive (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2003; Covin & Slevin, 1991; Taştan & Güçel, 2014). It is described as the blending of innovativeness, taking risk, and being proactive of an employee (De Jong et al., 2011). The only difference between EO and IB is that the earlier focused on the firm level analysis while the later focuses on the individual employee level of analysis.

IB centers on employee initiatives to prompt or embark on new ideas or processes even if they are not requested to do so by their organization (De Jong et al., 2011). IB results in to the creation of new technologies, product development, competitive postures, services, administrative techniques and strategies (Antoncic & Hisrich, 2001). Since business settings are becoming more dynamic and further sophisticated, firms need to foster IB in order to realize novel opportunities for more auspicious performance (Hayton, 2005). A number of studies have shown that IB is an important factor that influence individual performance for both managers and employees (Ahmad et al., 2012; Bakar & Mahmood, 2014; Bakar et al., 2016; Fellnhöfer et al., 2016; Ismail, Mahmood, & Ab Rahim, 2012; Stewart, 2009) and mediator between variables that influence individual performance (Ahmad et al., 2012; Bakar & Mahmood, 2014; Bakar et al., 2016).

## **2.4 Personality**

Personality attributes could be deliberated as the average level of an individual's state of Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, Openness, Agreeableness, and Extraversion that changes across situations and events, partly encountered randomly, chosen partly on purpose or aggravated by the individual (Fleeson, 2001).

Conscientiousness refer to the socially premeditated impulse control that expedites task directed and goal directed comportment (John et al., 2008). Emotional stability or Neuroticism relates the control of emotion and even-temperedness with adverse emotionality (John et al., 2008). Openness is the magnitude of imagination or fascination of an individual (Abdullah et al., 2016). Agreeableness or Disagreeableness is the extent to which an individual disagrees with other individuals (Abdullah et al., 2016). Extraversion describes the energetic approach relating to the social and material biosphere (John et al., 2008).

Ones et al. (2007) proves the cogency of relationship between personality and performance. Personality-performance relationship was found through all managerial tiers, professional groups, and performance outcomes (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick, Mount, & Judge, 2001; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000). It was extensively ascertained by criterion-related validity studies that personality traits are effective performance predictors (e.g., Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2010; Ones, Dilchert, Viswesvaran, & Judge, 2007). Many or all dimensions of the Five Factor Model (FFM) have been found to significantly influenced individual performance or its various scopes in diverse professions (Barrick et al., 2005; Fang et al., 2015; Ghani et al., 2016; Hogan & Holland, 2003; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Judge et al., 2013; Judge & Zapata, 2015; Lee & Olshfski, 2002; Raza & Ahmed, 2014; Sackett & Walmsley, 2014; Salgado, 1997).

Nevertheless, further research is required due to some result discrepancies across professions, that have been witnessed among the FFM dimensions from quantitative studies (Barrick et al., 2001, 2005; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Morgeson et al., 2007; Salgado, 1998; Salgado, 1997).

## **2.5 Psychological Safety**

Psychological safety is the impression of capability to employ and demonstrate one's self without the fear of any unreceptive costs to career, position, or personal image (Kahn, 1990). Psychological safety climate embodies the formal and informal progressions that guide and support open and trustful intramural work relations. Psychological safety is the work atmosphere that employees feel secured and fortified to express their thoughts without been chided or proscribed (Baer & Frese, 2003).

Psychological safety has been concomitant to several outcomes, nonetheless, studies on the psychological safety and individual performance relationship has been scanty (Singh et al., 2013). However, the few studies that exists, indicates a significant association between psychological safety and individual performance (Lance Frazier, Fainshmidt, Klinger, Pezeshkan, & Vracheva, 2016; Singh et al., 2013). This relationship was also found to be mediated by different variables (Brown & Leigh, 1996; Frazier & Tupper, 2016; Idris, Dollard, & Tuckey, 2015).

Most of the psychological safety and individual performance studies have been conducted in countries that are English speaking (Frazier et al., 2016). Further research is required on this relationship due to scanty literature, lack of cross-cultural comparisons across industries and nations, and the need to explore essential mechanisms that explain this relationship (Edmondson & Lei, 2014; Frazier et al., 2016).

## **2.6 Psychological Empowerment**

Psychological empowerment is concerned with enabling/empowering instead of delegating, it is described as the motivational conception of self-efficacy (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Psychological Empowerment denotes to the state of intrinsic motivation (demonstrated by competence, impact, meaning, and self-determination) with which employees feel a nous of control on their work (Spreitzer, 1995). Psychological Empowerment is the psychosomatic relations of the workforce and employers (Liu, Chiu, & Fellows, 2007).

Managers that feel psychologically empowered, recognize themselves as adept and dexterous to meaningfully influence their occupational settings, likely to be proactive, and likely more effective (Spreitzer, 1995). Empirical studies indicates the positive relationship of psychological empowerment and individual performance (Chen, Kirkman, Kanfer, Allen, & Rosen, 2007; Chiang & Hsieh, 2012; Hall, 2008; Hechanova, Alampay, & Franco, 2006; Li, Wei, Ren, & Di, 2015; Liden, Wayne, & Sparrowe, 2000; Ölçer

& Florescu, 2015; Sun, 2016). On the contrary, psychological empowerment is not unquestionably related to individual performance (Dewettinck, Singh, & Buyens, 2003). However, the relatively limited studies on this relationship in developing economies require further investigation.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study is aimed at eliminating any doubt concerning the validity and reliability of the study instruments, suggestions acquired from this pilot study will be incorporated and revisions of the study items will be made where necessary. Survey design was therefore adopted to gauge the opinion of production/operation managers middle of Nigerian MEs. Sixty copies of face-to-face self-administered questionnaires were distributed randomly to production managers of MEs in Kano state of Nigeria.

Questionnaires that are self-administered assist the researcher in making the questionnaire more fathomable to respondents while holding the survey, similarly, higher rate of response are more prone for the self-administered questionnaires (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Though the number of distributed questionnaires is small in this study, pilot tests samples are usually small (Fink, 2003).

Closed-ended questions are used for this study because it help the respondents to make fast and easy choices, it is also easier for data coding and supplementary analysis by the researcher (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Similarly, closed-ended questions has more advantages compared to other data collection methods, which consist of direct and better statistical generation such as tabulation, coding and analysis (Dawson, 2007). Furthermore, closed-ended questionnaire is one of the widely used and reliable instrument for data collection, it is therefore more suitable for this study

The five-point Likert scale of measurement was adopted for the questionnaire items because it is a midpoint scale which is alleged to yield better and accurate results (Krosnick & Fabrigar, 1997), assist respondents to indicate their opinion simply and unambiguously (Schuman & Presser, 1981), it is the most apropos scale and provide better results (Neuman & Robson, 2008), and that increase in the scale does not bolster the reliability score (Elmore & Beggs, 1975). The same scale was used by scholars in similar studies (Bakar & Mahmood, 2014; Bakar et al., 2016; Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016; Koopmans et al., 2013, 2014; Koopmans et al., 2014).

The questionnaire is distributed in to three sections. The first section contain 13 questions adapted from Koopmans et al. (2014) to measure the individual performance i.e. dependent variable. The second section consists 78 questions i.e. 15 items for intrapreneurial behavior adapted from (Stull, 2005), 44 items for Five Factor personality adapted from (John & Srivastava, 1999), 7 items for psychological safety adopted from Edmondson (1999) and 12 items for psychological empowerment adopted from (Spreitzer, 1995). The third section contains six items in nominal scale for the respondents' demographic background.

From the 60 distributed questionnaires, 41 were returned fully completed, which makes a 68.3% response rate. The prime concern of the pilot study is to ascertain the validity and reliability of the study instrument. Validity determines the amount to which the study instrument is measuring the study concepts/variables, but the reliability is evaluating the amount to which the study instrument is consistent, stable, and free from error across various scale of the items.

Validity is the proof that the research instrument for a study is gauging the study concept appropriately (Hair Jr., Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Face/content validity was carried out in this study to verify the validity of the study items on the face of measuring the study construct. Reliability test was also conducted, using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient method. This study opt for the Cronbach's alpha coefficient method, for been a certified, steady and most widely used method of testing reliability by scholars (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Reliability indicates the amount to which all responses to the study items are consistent. Thus, SPSS v24 was utilized for this study to assess the reliability of measures.

## **4.0 RESULT OF VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY TESTS**

### **4.1 Validity Test**

The validity of instrument for this study was measured using the content validity, which was assessed through face validity. Accordingly, a small sample of respondents and expert panel were inquired to give input and comments with respect to the appropriateness of the study items. The experts referred includes an associate professor, a professor and senior lecturers, from the College of Business, Universiti Utara Malaysia, the Department of Business Administration, Northwest University, Kano and Bayero University Kano Nigeria. In addition, some Ph.D. scholars who are accustomed with Nigeria were consulted to examine the clarity of the study instruments. Likewise, the input of ME managers was acknowledged. Some items were therefore rearticulated to measure the construct properly and to be correctly understood by the prospective respondents. This process started from 11<sup>th</sup> of January and ended by 24<sup>th</sup> January\_2017. The reviewed version of the questionnaire was disseminated for the pilot after the face validity.

### **4.2 Reliability Test**

This study reveals greater reliability values for all the study measures which ranging from 0.75 to 0.87. This is compatible with the Cronbach's alpha coefficient benchmark which considers a coefficient of 0.60 as average reliability, and a coefficient of 0.70 or above as greater reliability standard for the instrument (Hair Jr. et al., 2010; Nunnally, 1978; Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Table 4.1 depicts the reliability results in summary.

**Table 4.1: Reliability Test**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Successful Middle Manager's Performance	13	0.804
Intrapreneurial Behavior	15	0.822
Conscientiousness	09	0.756
Extraversion	08	0.871
Disagreeableness	09	0.878
Emotional Intelligence	08	0.850
Openness to Experience	10	0.805
Psychological Safety	07	0.835
Psychological Empowerment	12	0.779
Total	91	

Source: Computed by the researcher

From the above table, the pilot test results shows that all the study constructs have a Cronbach's alpha values of beyond 0.70. Thus, none of the study items should to be removed, since the entire constructs are reliable.

### **4.3 Demography of Respondents**

The descriptive analysis shows that 92.7% of the respondents are Male while 7.3% are female, age of the respondents range from 25-34years which carries 58.5%, 35-44years carries 36.6%, 45-54years carries 4.9%. For the study qualification; 29.3% hold a Diploma/NCE, 58.5% hold a Degree/HND, and 12.2% hold Masters/PGD certificates. 95.1% spend less than 5 years in service whereas 4.9% spend 5-10 years in service, however 100% of the respondents spend less than 5 years in their current positions. Finally, 92.7% of the responds serve in the manufacturing sector while 7.3% are in the service sector. Table 4.2 depict the summary of descriptive analysis.

**Table 4.2: Summary of Respondents Demography**

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S/No.	Items	Frequency	Percent (%)
1	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	38	92.7
	Female	03	7.3
2	<b>Age</b>		
	25-34	24	58.5
	35-44	15	36.6
	45-54	02	4.9
	Above 55	0	0
3	<b>Study Qualification</b>		
	Secondary Certificate	0	0
	Diploma/NCE	12	29.3
	Degree/HND	24	58.5
	Masters/PGD	5	12.2
	PhD	0	0
4	<b>Years in Service</b>		
	Less than 5 Years	39	95.1
	5-10 Years	2	4.9
	Above 10 Years	0	0
5	<b>Years in Current Position</b>		
	Less than 5 Years	41	100
	5-10 Years		
	Above 10 Years		
6	<b>Industrial Sector of the Firm</b>		
	Manufacturing	38	92.7
	Service	3	7.3

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

This study pretests the face/content validity and reliability of the study instrument in order to prepare for the full scale study. The validity of the study instrument was proved through face validity process which leads to revisions of some items. Equally, reliability of the study items has been certified using the Cronbach's alpha, which reveals the coefficient values of above 0.70 for each construct. Therefore, the study instrument is considered valid and reliable for full scale study in the Nigerian context. Future studies may find this constructs useful to study the relationship between psychological factors, intrapreneurial behavior, and individual performance of managers.

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